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Under the Dome - December 2002

McKissick Museum--University of South Carolina

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UNDER *the* DOME

McKISSICK MUSEUM NEWSLETTER • DECEMBER 2002

"Considerable Grace: Fifteen Years of South Carolina Folk Heritage Awards"

The South Carolina Folk Heritage Award was created by the South Carolina legislature in 1987 to recognize lifetime achievement in traditional folk art. The award recognizes individuals or groups who have used their lives to create beauty and meaning for their communities in ways that have lasted, often for hundreds of years. Winners of the award represent those who have demonstrated excellence in folk art while maintaining and enriching the lives of members of their community and the state through their unique talents. Past winners include sweetgrass basketmakers, old-time fiddlers, quilters, and gospel choirs.

McKissick Museum has been intimately involved with this process from the beginning and worked with Harriette Keyserling to establish legislative sponsorship of the award.

In addition to now administering the awards with the South Carolina Arts Commission, the Folklife Resource Center houses all of the nominee support materials and research information while the collections department manages traditional art objects made by award winners.

These resources are being used to develop the exhibit "Considerable Grace: Fifteen Years of South Carolina Folk Heritage Awards." The most extensive project dealing with award winners to date, it will utilize the entire first floor of the museum. Opening this spring, "Considerable Grace" will incorporate objects, photographs, audio, video, and live performance. While conducting research for the exhibit, staff members found that McKissick's collection did not contain objects from all of the award winners. Now more than ever before, McKissick considers it a priority to build and maintain a comprehensive



A Neil D. Cost signature design—the "paddle" turkey call in the final stages of construction.

collection of traditional folk art made by award winners. How can you help? Join McKissick Museum for blues, bluegrass, and barbecue.

Blues, Bluegrass, and BBQ

Mark your calendars for Friday, April 11 to attend an evening of Blues, Bluegrass, and BBQ. The party, held in conjunction with the exhibit "Considerable Grace: Fifteen Years of the South Carolina Folk Heritage Awards," is a fund raiser to build and preserve the museum's collections. Along with the staff, members of the museum's advisory council are helping to organize and host this important event.

Tickets are \$35 per person or \$60 per couple and include an evening of music performed by Folk Heritage Award winners, all the barbecue and fixin's you can eat as well as beverages. Of course, the museum's galleries will be open too!

Not only will proceeds from the ticket sales go to a special collection fund, there will be the opportunity to purchase or make a donation for a specific object to be placed in the museum's holdings. Items on McKissick's wish list include a mandolin



Claude Lucas—1992 Award-recipient:
Old Time Country Music Fiddling

by Jennings Chestnut Sr., a turkey call by Neil D. Cost, and a sweetgrass basket by Harriett Bailem Brown.

Building the collections goes hand-in-hand with preserving the museum's existing collections. Proceeds from the ticket sales as well as contributions can also go to such things as conservation treatment for a "masterpiece" quilt or the digitization of analog traditional music recordings.

So show your support for McKissick Museum while enjoying some of the best mouth-watering barbecue, old-time fiddlin', blues, and banjo pickin' in South Carolina.



Pappy Sherrill (left) and Al Wall (right) performing in spring 2001

McKissick considers it a priority to build and maintain a comprehensive collection of traditional folk art made by award winners.

McKissick "On the Road"

In keeping with our tradition of distributing academic and original projects through our Traveling Exhibitions Program, McKissick is currently touring a number of presentations, both this year and next. Several previous traveling exhibits will also return to circulation during the coming year.

Current traveling exhibits:

"... A Portion of the People: Three Hundred Years of Southern Jewish Life"
Yeshiva University Museum, New York, N.Y. (February 6–July 20, 2003)
Levine Museum of the New South, Charlotte, N.C. (September 14–November 29, 2003)

"Myth, Memory and Imagination: Universal Themes in the Life and Culture of the South"
Hampton University Museum, Hampton, Va. (January 17–March 9, 2003)

"The Middle Passage: Works by Tom Feelings"
Slavery and Civil War Museum, Selma, Ala. (January 6–March 16, 2003)



"The Middle Passage" by Tom Feelings

Upcoming and returning traveling exhibitions:

"A Soldier's Legacy: The Life and Music of Ralph Smith"

"Knowing Nature: Scientific Study in the South, 1600–1850"

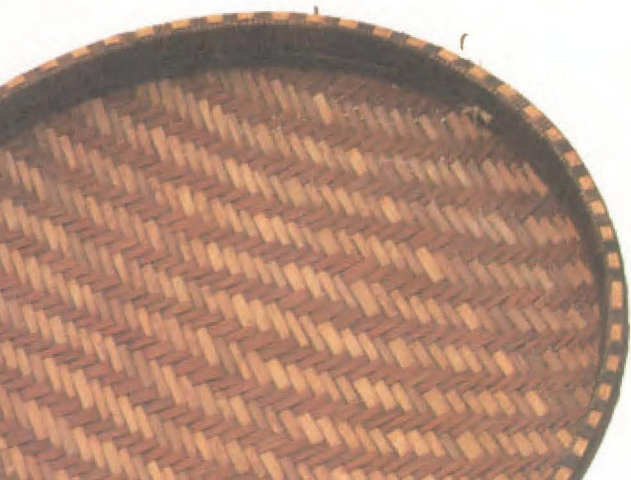
"Pop Up Culture: Reflections on the Electric Toaster"

"Row Upon Row: Sea Grass Baskets of the South Carolina Lowcountry"

"Southern Stews: Traditions of One Pot Cooking"

"The Songs of Maybelle Stamper"

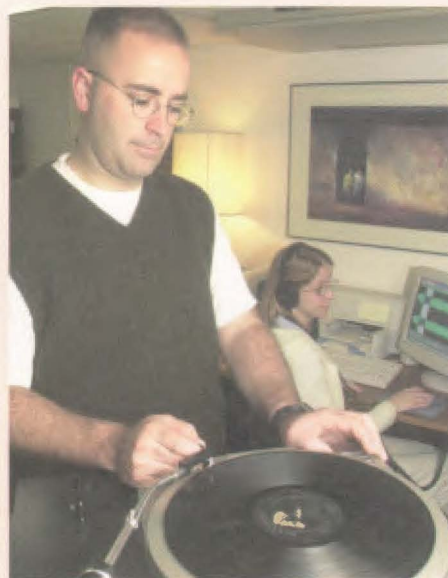
For more information on the locations and dates of the upcoming traveling exhibition venues, please see the Traveling Exhibitions Web page at www.cla.sc.edu/MCKS/html/exhib.htm#Traveling



Sweetgrass Basket

Folklife Resource Center Makes Digital Transition

The Folklife Resource Center houses one of the few regional audio collections in the South. Since 1985, the folklife department has considered the proper storage and preservation of these materials to be a top priority. Recording technology has changed a great deal in the past 15 years and keeping up with this technology is a challenging, yet essential task.



The resource center contains audio in a wide variety of formats that virtually represent the spectrum of modern recording history. Wax cylinders from the early 1900s, acetate records (78s) from the 1940s through the 1960s, reel-to-reel tape, analog cassette, and digital audiotape account for several thousand individual recordings in the collection.

The challenge presented was twofold. First, in their present state, researchers have very limited access to the audio materials.

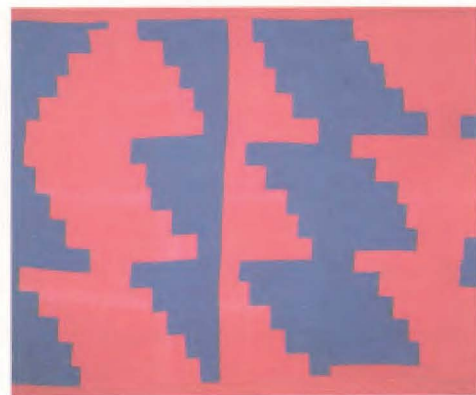
Repeated playback of reel-to-reel tapes, for instance, increases the chance of breakage. Second, and most important, with some of the materials approaching 20 years of age, physical deterioration is a major concern.

While not terribly expensive to initiate such a transfer process, it is extremely labor intensive. The transfer of audio from analog to digital format must be done in "real time," meaning that a 60-minute taped interview will take 60 minutes to transfer into the computer for processing. The resource center has cultivated an effective relationship with other University departments to utilize interns and graduate assistants to assist with this very important ongoing project.

Within a two-year time frame, we hope to have all of the audio materials transferred into digital format. This will add a level of versatility that the Folklife Resource Center has never been able to offer. Researchers will have immediate access to the materials without compromising their quality or longevity, a more stable storage medium will be achieved, and incorporation of the materials into Web-based applications will be a reality.

Traditional Craft Workshop Series to Begin in January

Many people remember the Traditional Craft Workshops held at McKissick several years ago and have requested a repeat of this outstanding program. The series will return on January 25 with an all-day quilting workshop. The class will be instructed by Maree Dowdy, a well known traditional appliqué and pieced quilt maker from Columbia. It will run from 9 a.m. until 4



Quilt by 1989 award recipient Carrie Coachman. "Log Cabin" or "Courthouse Steps" pattern, 1946.

p.m. and is appropriate for novice and advanced quilters. The cost for the workshop is \$45 and will include lunch and all materials. This workshop has a limited enrollment to ensure that each participant receives personal attention from the instructor.

Major Donation of Catawba Pottery

McKissick Museum has recently acquired an important collection of Catawba Pottery from Philip and Debbie Wingard. Many of these pieces date from the late 18th to early 20th centuries and were featured in the "Catawba Clay" exhibition held at the museum last year.

Although McKissick has extensive holdings of Catawba pottery, this 22-piece acquisition fills in the few remaining gaps in the collection. Several of the pots represent the period when members of the Catawba tribe migrated to the Smokey Mountains and helped to revitalize the dying production of Cherokee pottery. Well-formed

pots by Nettie

Owl, Maude

Welsh, and

Lloyd Owl

illustrate

the creativity

of this cross-

tribal activity. Dur-

ing the early 20th century,

however, the Catawbans pro-

duced large quantities of

trade wares, often of

inferior quality, that were

marketed as "Cherokee" pot-

tery in the North Carolina mountains. A small

Catawba pot, in the shape of a lady's slipper, bears

the Cherokee Pottery mark. Trade wares

were also sold on the streets of Rock Hill,

S.C. A set of bookends and a soap dish

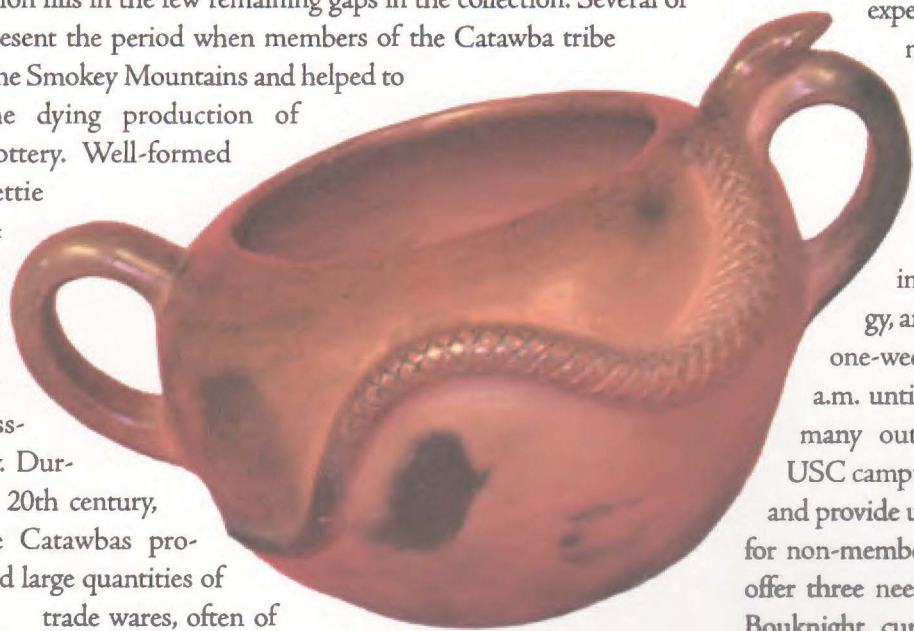
represent this era.

The collection also contains works by late 19th century master potters such as Susannah Harris Owl, Epp

Harris, and Rhoda George Harris. The two-handled snake pot by Owl and the pipes by Epp and Rhoda Harris are classic forms that have cultural significance to the history of the Catawba Nation. Two works by potters Sara

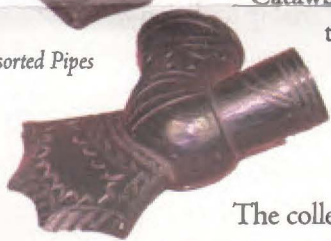
Ayers and Cheryl Harris Sanders illustrate the transition between the revival of Catawba pottery in the 1970s to the conscious art forms created

by today's new generation of master potters.



Snake Pot by Susanna Owl

Assorted Pipes



McKissick Mornings Summer Programs for Young People

Plan now for your child or grandchild to have a great summer. In 2002, McKissick enjoyed the most successful summer camp experience ever with camp registrations filling early. Class size is limited to the first 17

students and this year's camps are

expected to fill even earlier. The

museum offers a variety of

educational and fun experi-

ences that reflect the muse-

um's focus on southern cul-

ture, community, and the

environment. Classes offered

include art, archaeology, geolo-

gy, and nature study. All camps are

one-week sessions lasting from 8:30

a.m. until noon each day and include

many outdoor activities around the

USC campus. The teachers are all professionals in their respective fields

and provide unique learning opportunities for young minds. Fees are \$85

for non-members of the museum and \$70 for members. In addition, we

offer three need-based scholarships on a first-come basis. Contact Alice

Bouknight, curator of Educational Services, for details or to register by

phone with a credit card. This year's camps are listed in full on the back page

under "Activities."



A camper practices her papermaking skills in the Summer 2002 art class.



Campers sort through the dirt, looking for that precious stone.

Jonathan Green Works Added to Collection

Artist Jonathan Green and Richard Weedman, manager of Jonathan Green Studios, Inc., have made a gift of 12 hand-drawn lithographs and one hand-pulled serigraph to the collection of McKissick Museum. This gift officially establishes the Jonathan Green print archive as a division of the museum's art collection. As new limited-edition prints are produced by the artist, they will be purchased by McKissick to maintain a complete suite of Green prints.

The donation of original lithographs includes a number of print editions that are completely sold out, and otherwise unavailable, except on the secondary market. Jonathan Green's fine print editions are relatively small—each one numbering between 100 and 250.

Among the sold-out images donated to the museum are Daughters of the South, The Escorting of Ruth, Father and Son, and Noon Wash. Green's print images are sometimes similar to paintings reproduced in the popular book *Gullah Images*; however, none of the prints are reproductions of those paintings. *Daughters of the South*, for example, may look like the oil on canvas of the same title, but was hand-drawn by the artist on lithographic

plates, which were separately inked and run through a hand-cranked lithographic press one at a time, and one color at a time. *Father and Son*, another lithograph by Green, was printed in 20 colors, each printed one at a time on a traditional printmaking paper—in this case, Arches 100 percent rag paper made in France.

Many individuals confuse hand-pulled fine art prints with photo-reproductions, often reproduced by photographing a watercolor or oil painting and having a commercial printer produce a certain number of offset lithographic reproductions. Adding to the confusion, such "prints" are sometimes signed and numbered by artists. These printed photo-reproductions are collectables, but are not considered fine art prints by museums.

Jonathan Green's prints, on the other hand, are superb examples of the highest quality handmade prints being produced today. McKissick thanks Jonathan Green and Richard Weedman for placing their trust in the museum as the official repository of the Jonathan Green Print Archive.

Exhibitions

Collections Highlights

*"An Everlasting Piece:
Quilts from the Permanent Collections"*
through January 26, 2003

"Palmetto Silver: Riches of the South"
through December 1, 2002

"Frederick Hart: A Celebration of Spirit"
through January 20, 2003

"A Soldier's Legacy"
through February 2, 2003

"Robert Lyon: Recent Sculpture"
January 26–March 9, 2003

"Enamelware: Art for All"
January 26–March 9, 2003

"Faculty Art Exhibit"
February 9–July 13, 2003

*"Considerable Grace: Fifteen Years of
South Carolina Folk Heritage Awards"*
April 6–December 31, 2003

Activities

January 25,
Traditional Crafts Workshop,
9 a.m.–4 p.m.,
\$45 fee includes materials and lunch.

April 11,
Blues, Bluegrass, and BBQ
tickets are \$35 a person; \$60 per couple

Summer Camps:

"I'm a Natural!" Art From Outdoors
June 2–6 Rising 1st and 2nd Graders

A World of Art: Traditional Crafts From Around the Globe
June 9–13 Rising 3rd and 5th Graders

Extraordinary Art: Everyday Fun
June 16–20 Rising 4th and 6th Graders

Basic Drawing and Painting
June 23–27 Rising 6th and 8th Graders

Junior Naturalists
July 7–11 Rising 4th and 6th Graders

Archaeology Explorers
July 14–18 Rising 3rd and 5th Graders

Earth Explorers
July 21–25 Rising 3rd and 5th Graders



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McKissick Museum is located at the head of the University of South Carolina's historic Horseshoe in the heart of campus. All exhibitions are free and open to the public.

Gallery hours are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday. The museum is open until 7 p.m. on Thursdays and from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Sundays. McKissick is closed on Mondays and Saturdays. Metered parking is available on all adjacent streets and in the lower level of Pendleton Street Garage.

A number of volunteer opportunities are available at McKissick Museum. Call 803-777-7251 for information on membership, tours, programs, and exhibits. Visit us on the Internet at www.cla.sc.edu/mcks/index.html.

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